

SUMMARY OF STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

GDOT Truck Lane Needs Identification Study – June 6, 2006 Capital Education Center – Atlanta, Georgia

The first Statewide Advisory Committee Meeting for the GDOT Truck Lane Needs Identification Study was held at the Capitol Education Center on June 6, 2006 beginning at approximately 1:30 PM. Joe Palladi, GDOT's State Planning Administrator, welcomed the group. The following individuals attended the meeting.

Name	Company	Phone	E-Mail
Ed Hutchinson	Florida DOT	850-414-4900	Ed.Hutchinson@dot.state.fl.us
Alan Brown	Norfolk Southern	404-897-3061	Alan.brown@modalgistics.com
Sam Wellborn	GDOT Board	706-507-4332	--
Sharon Ferguson	GTMA-Hurt Plaza	404-688-0555	sferguson@gtma.org
Max Azizi	FHWA	404-562-3650	Max.Azizi@fhwa.dot.gov
Ralph Volpe	FHWA	404-562-3637	Ralph.Volpe@fhwa.dot.gov
Guy Young	GA Motor Trucking Assoc.	770-444-9771	guy@gmta.org
Barbara Stafford	GA Chamber of Commerce	404-223-2274	BStafford@gachamber.com
Mitch Land	Shaw Industries	706-581-5499	Mitch.land@shawinc.com
Randy Weitman	GA Ports Authority	912-964-3916	rweitman@gaports.com
Mark Tilden	GA Power Company	404-506-4203	matilden@southernco.com
Alan Erera	GA Tech	404-385-0358	alerera@isye.gatech.edu
David Weir	GA State Road and Tollway Authority	404-893-6126	dweir@georgiatolls.com
Marc Cutler	Cambridge Systematics	--	--
Andrew Smith	HNTB	404-946-5700	asmith@hntb.com
Doug Allen	HNTB	404-946-5700	dougallen@hntb.com
Claudia Bilotto	GeoStats	--	cbilotto@geostats.com
Joe Palladi	GDOT	--	Joe.palladi@dot.state.ga.us
Tamrat (Tim) Kassa	GDOT	--	Tamrat.kassa@dot.state.ga.us
Radney Simpson	GDOT	--	Radney.simpson@dot.state.ga.us
Matthew Fowler	GDOT	--	Matthew.fowler@dot.state.ga.us
Jamie Cochran	J. Cochran & Co.	404-285-7577	jacoch@bellsouth.net
Dike Ahanotu	Cambridge Systematics	--	--

Mr. Palladi explained that the study began in April 2006 and GDOT hired a consultant team (HNTB/Cambridge Systematics/GeoStats/J. Cochran & Co.) to assist in the project. The purpose of the study is to examine the feasibility for a truck-only lane system in Georgia and to identify locations where truck only lanes can be feasible from the standpoints of engineering, operations, and economics. The study will be complete by October 2007.

Mr. Palladi pointed out that truck volumes are increasing rapidly nation-wide and in Georgia. The State's roadway infrastructure wears out faster due to this growing truck travel and we need a plan to deal with this challenge. GDOT has completed its Statewide Transportation Plan which has a planning horizon of 2035. The Department has also embarked on the I-285 Strategic Implementation Plan which involves consideration of truck-only lanes, high-occupancy vehicle

lanes, and bus rapid transit. The new traffic model being used for this project is seeing international attention. GDOT is also pursuing a Radial Freeway System Plan which will address passenger car movements, public transportation and truck travel.

GDOT has activated several projects to obtain up-to-date data on traffic characteristics, including trucks and is upgrading its traffic count technology statewide. This is being done to assist with emergency response activities. Mr. Palladi introduced Tim Kassa, GDOT's Project Manager for the study. The group made self-introductions.

Andrew Smith (HNTB), the Project Manager for the consultant team, began the slide presentation that gave an overview of the project's purpose and scope, the role of the Advisory Committees, the study work program, the analysis framework for the project, the project schedule, and the project team. Doug Allen discussed the relationship of the project to other on-going state and regional studies. Marc Cutler discussed the data collection activities being undertaken for the project. Jamie Cochran described the planned public involvement and stakeholder coordination activities and tools to be used to communicate about the project (i.e. website, etc.). Copies of the meeting agenda and slide presentation are attached.

During the presentation, the following questions were asked:

Q: As part of this study, are we trying to find out if truckers stop and wait for traffic to decrease before moving through Atlanta or whether they just come through the area despite the congestion? It was suggested that maybe we should consider a system where a truck would secure a pre-scheduled "slot" to travel through Atlanta. Perhaps we should prohibit through trucks from traveling during the rush hour.

A: We are gathering data to understand how truckers make their travel decisions about when to travel through Atlanta. The Latin American Truck Travel Study (LATTS) pointed out that north-south travel was growing substantially in the U.S. due to economic activity in the Caribbean and South America. The Corridor 1 study is examining north-south movements from Canada through the eastern seaboard states to find ways to streamline these movements. The global impacts (imports and exports) of our economy have to be considered in our transportation system.

Q: Are we looking at tolling truck lanes?

A: Please Note: A more complete answer to this question should have been given at the meeting. It should have been stated that the study will include an analysis of how tolls might affect the travel demand (number of vehicles using particular transportation corridors); however, the study will not include a detailed analysis of the revenue aspects of any potential tolls on truck lanes. The primary purpose of this study is to look at how, where, and when truck lanes may be feasible on interstate highways and other limited access routes in Georgia.

Other related comments:

- GDOT has an on-going freight transportation planning process. There are several planning studies underway by GDOT and ARC that are looking at truck issues. All of these studies will impact the merit of truck only lanes on the interstate highways.
- The Georgia State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) will be requesting proposals this week for its I-75 South Congestion Pricing Study. It will also issue a Request for Proposal soon for its Northwest Tollway project in Savannah.

- ARC's Regional Freight Study is underway and will have interim recommendations by the Fall of 2006. These recommendations are being developed so they can be incorporated into the on-going update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Group Exercise

Part of the meeting was devoted to a break-out session where two facilitated groups were asked to respond to a set of questions. The questions and responses from each group are shown below.

Besides traffic congestion, what are the most significant issues impacting truck travel in Georgia?

Group 1 (mostly public sector representatives)

- Reliability
- Enforcement
- Safety
- Air Quality
- Comfort Level
- Reduces capacity
- Land Use

Group 2 (mostly private sector representatives)

- Reliability/unreliability of travel times
- Interactions between cars and trucks
- Public awareness of truck issues (i.e. how long it takes to stop a truck, etc.)
- Safety – mixed travel streams
- Fuel costs
- Role of “just in time” delivery systems
- Congestion – impacts on shippers’ business decisions
- Trucks desire continuous through movement with as little delay as possible
- Understanding the truck movements (local vs. through/long haul)
- Permitted moves (i.e. oversize loads)

What factors should be considered in determining whether truck only lanes should be built in Georgia?

Group 1 (mostly public sector representatives)

- What kind? Segments? Systems?
- Access and configuration
- Financing
- Truck volumes
- Congestion
- Truck generators
- Pricing
- Demand forecasts
- Vehicle classifications
- Time-of-day traffic/truck volumes
- Safety

- Costs/benefits
- Policies
- Education
- Freight mode choice
- Economics of freight
- Intermodal connectivity
- Needs of shippers/receivers
- Hours of service regulation
- Needs of consumers
- Roadway design
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Urban circumferentials

Group 2 (mostly private sector representatives)

- Customers with no inventory (they rely on timely truck deliveries)
- Strategic Industry Task Force
 - Logistics are critical
 - Incentives to attract business
- Infrastructure costs (related/leading to load limits that restrict route choice)
- Requirement for large truck pools – impacting local land uses
- Larger local markets (within large urban areas like Atlanta)
- Population growth
- Cost/who pays?
- Recognize truck issues in project design phase – design considerations that are appropriate for trucks
- Express lanes for through trucks
- Dispatching capacity – assigning traffic to lanes (like railroads control their operations)
- Incident management
- Separate cars and trucks
- Safety
- Traffic volumes
- Congestion
- Need for better access in urban areas
- Rural areas as TOL candidate areas (due to right-of-way availability and easy maintenance)

Who should be involved in developing public policies on truck only lanes?

Group 1 (mostly public sector representatives)

- Transportation Board
- GDOT
- Local Governments
- Trucking industry by segment
- Law enforcement
- Emergency management
- FHWA
- Other states
- Trade associations
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Regional Development Centers

- Toll authorities
- Business community
- Ports
- Airports
- Department of Defense
- Homeland Security
- Public
- Railroads
- Media

Group 2 (mostly private sector representatives)

- Trucking companies (excellent information source)
- Railroads
- Intermodal operators
- Whoever pays needs to be at the table
- MPOs
- GDOT
- ARC
- Motor Carrier Compliance people
- Homeland Security
- General public

What are the best ways to obtain their involvement?

Group 1 (mostly public sector representatives)

- Meetings
- Speakers Bureau
- Surveys
- Working groups
- Focus groups
- Internet
- Rest areas/truck stops
- Media/education
- Champions

Group 2 (mostly private sector representatives)

- E-mail updates
- Webcasts

Other Issues from Group 1 – Shown on Statewide Map

- Land use distribution in exurban/suburban areas is generating truck VMT (vehicles miles of travel).
- Air quality issues in Chattanooga, Atlanta, and Macon areas.
- Better east-west connectivity is needed along GA 20 corridor through Bartow, Cherokee, Forsyth and Jackson Counties (connecting I-75 to I-985 to I-85).
- Better east-west connectivity is needed along the south I-285 corridor from HJAIA area to I-75.
- Need new east-west route between I-75 and I-85 through Coweta, Fayette, and Henry Counties.

- Lots of warehousing in southwest Henry County.
- SR 16 improvements in Spalding and Butts Counties.
- Need continuous route from SR 34 in Heard County south along SR 100 to I-185, then east along SR 22 and SR 96 connecting to I-75 south of Macon.
- Sprawl and land use issues in Savannah-Chatham County area and Gwinnett County.

Responses to Questionnaire (five responses)

A short questionnaire was distributed to the meeting attendees to get feedback on some topics related to truck lanes in general and the study in particular. Of the total number of attendees (13), excluding GDOT and consultant personnel, the team received five returned surveys (about 39% response rate). Not all respondents answered every question.

How familiar are you with the concept of Truck Only Lanes?

- So-so
- Only as an observer and visiting other states
- Familiar – use NJ Turnpike
- Considerably
- Very

Besides traffic congestion, what do you see as the three greatest transportation issues or concerns regarding Truck Only Lanes?

- Pricing (tolled or not tolled); usage (voluntary or mandatory), and design
- Economic benefit by user group (freight vs. passenger); usage forecasting, especially with regard to pricing/tolling; and auxiliary benefit (safety, air quality, maintenance cost).
- Cost; enforcement; and access points.
- Not doing them and the economic impact; length of time it will take to do them; and who will pay.
- Safety; efficiency; and cost/need.

What transportation corridors and areas of the State are of most interest to you in terms of truck and freight-related traffic?

- I-75/85
- Dalton to Savannah; I-20 to Birmingham, and I-75 to Florida south of Atlanta
- I-75/85
- I-75 (Atlanta to Chattanooga); I-285 (Northern Arc), and I-75 (Macon to Atlanta)
- Metro Atlanta and Savannah

Do you believe Truck Only Lanes are needed in Georgia? Where? Why?

- I-75/85 and I-285 – reduce congestion and make GA travel safer.
- All around Atlanta and all major arteries in the State that are needed. We want freight and manufacturing and distribution in GA – let's be known for efficient infrastructure. Without it, we will have a terrible traffic reputation.
- Bypass in Atlanta – Macon (north-south)
- Maybe – the benefits and costs need to be accurately estimated and compared to other alternatives (HOV).

Has your business been impacted by:

Truck-related accidents

- Don't know
- Yes
- Yes
- No
- No answer

Traffic congestion on Georgia's interstate highways and other important routes?

- No answer
- No answer
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes

Lack of efficient truck routes in Georgia?

- Yes
- No
- Yes
- No answer
- No answer

Other difficulty in transporting goods and/or services on Georgia's interstate highways and other important routes?

- No answer
- No answer
- Yes
- Don't know
- Yes

Overall, how efficiently do you think Georgia's freight mobility is?

- Don't know/no opinion
- Somewhat inefficient
- Somewhat efficient
- Somewhat efficient
- No answer

What advice do you have for the project team for exploring the feasibility of truck only lanes in Georgia?

- No answer
- Explore methods for accurate usage prediction, with freight industry input.
Explore usage of PIERS data for import/export projections.
- No answer
- Good start so far
- No answer

How did you hear about this meeting?

- Word of mouth
- Letter invitation in the mail
- GDOT letter of invitation
- Invitation
- No answer

Was the time and location of the meeting convenient for you to attend?

- No answer
- Yes
- No answer
- Yes
- Yes

Please share your suggestions on improving the way public meetings are conducted as part of this project.

- So far, so good
- Must find a way to involve more industry representatives at the stakeholder meetings, especially national shippers and carriers.

JAC:c